

69,469-241; OT-5178

With regard to the Examiner's questions on the operation of Applicants' invention, Applicants again note that there is no claim or description that the elevator car in Applicants' invention floats vertically. Rather, as described on page 4, lines 16-19 of applicants' specification and as shown in FIG. 4, there is only a small clearance between the crossing member 32 and the walls 51 and 53 of guide member 38. As the car 28 is driven, the crossing member 32 and hence the entire car follower 22 will move with it. Notably, claim 3 requires that the car follower and car are generally "constrained to move with said car follower" along a vertical path.

The Examiner also objects to applicants' disclosure of the control. Again, a worker of ordinary skill in the art would be able to define control parameters. A patent application need not be a complete specification of every feature that would be considered. As described in applicants' specification, control 30 communicates with and controls electromagnets 24 and 26 in accordance with controls known in the art. Applicants have already noted that the field strength of the electromagnets (and, in turn, the magnitude of repulsive force) may be controlled based on sensing various parameters such as car speed and load, or vibration (page 5, lines 21-32). Alternatively, for example, as generally described in the cited He et al. patent, the controller may control the strength of the magnetic field by varying the current from the power supply to the electromagnets based on information from acceleration sensors. In view of the number of possible variations on controlling the field strength of the electromagnets that are consistent with the present invention, applicants submit that no further description of the functionality of control 30 than that already provided in applicants' specification is required.

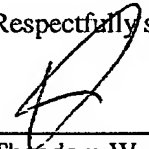
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Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 4-5 and 9-10 contain allowable subject matter. However, applicants submit that the Examiner's rejections to claims 1-3, 6-8 and 11 under He et al in view of Kurosawa et al. is improper. The Examiner has acknowledged that the primary reference to He, et al. does not disclose a repulsive force. Thus, the Examiner relies on the Japanese reference Kurosawa, et al. for the teaching of electromagnets interacting with a repulsive force. However, Kurosawa, et al. teaches a levitation device for floating a floor of an elevator relative to the frame and adjusting the gap between the floor and car frame. The floating device provides a repulsive force in the longitudinal direction for the purpose of isolating the floor from the car frame, thereby reducing the vibrations of the floor.

While it is unclear from the translation provided whether the force is repulsive or attractive, the function of the Japanese reference is so distinct from the function of He, et al., as to not be a reason to modify He, et al. at any rate. Providing separation between a car floor and the remainder of a frame may well point to the use of a repulsive force for the purpose of maintaining separation between the two.

In the He, et al. arrangement, the use of centering electromagnets already provides vibration control (Col. 5, lines 9-35). Therefore, there is no motivation to look to alternative configurations such as taught by Kurosawa et al. for such purpose. Moreover, the opposed magnets in He et al. center the car; the Japanese reference merely teaches maintaining a minimum longitudinal gap, but does not teach any structure for "centering." There is nothing within the Japanese reference that would recommend that a repulsive force would have any benefit or function in He, et al., nor is there any suggestion in He et al. that the configuration taught by Kurosawa et al. would provide any additional benefits. For these reasons, reconsideration of the final rejection is requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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Dated: June 26, 2008

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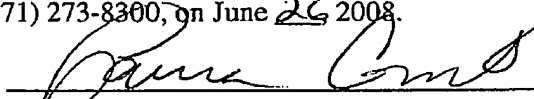
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, fax number (571) 273-8300, on June 26 2008.



Laura Combs